



Teaching and Learning Links

Office of Instructional Promising Practices Division of Standards and Learning

Inside This Issue

Best Practice Seminar Series	2
Professional Development, Grants and Other Opportunities	2
Governor's School for Science and Mathematics	2
Annual Literacy Leaders Award	3
Monthly Reading Calendars	3
State Read-In	4
No Book Left Unread	4
State Superintendent's Writing Award Program	5
SC Algebra Project	6
Summerfest 2009	6

From the Director's Desk

On February 10, 2009, the *Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA)* took effect. A major concern with this legislation was the requirement that all consumer products to be used by children twelve years of age or younger had to be tested for lead content. This requirement meant that public and school libraries could no longer provide books to students younger than thirteen.

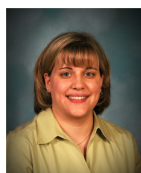
Last week the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) issued what, in essence, are temporary exemptions by delaying that requirement until February 2010. According to an Associated Press article, "the enforcement policy issued by the CPSC temporarily exempts materials with lead content that consistently fall well below the new standard.... That standard mandates kids' products may contain lead at a level of no more than 600 parts per million." You can read the entire article online at http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hcXV-UD4-r6LgQ_aaUYYP19XmmAD966C99G0.

Ordinary children's books printed after 1985 are included in the exemption. The Association of American Publishers have provided the CPSC with over 300 test results showing that finished books and their components are safe. However, no final decision has been made concerning children's books.

The Instructional Promising Practices staff urges caution in making drastic decisions about your library books until a final decision has been made by the CPSC. We will be monitoring the ongoing discussions and decisions and will keep you informed.

Suzette Lee, Director
803-734-6103
slee@ed.sc.gov

2008–09 Best Practice Seminar Series



The fifth session in the Best Practice Seminar Series will be held on March 2, 2009, at the Brookland Baptist Church Conference Center. Sara Kajder will lead the session on "New Literacies: Technology to Engage Students."

To register, go to the registration link at <https://elearning.ed.sc.gov>, click on the Catalog & Registration Tab. The catalog number for this session is OIPP 3005. Please print a copy of your completed registration **prior to submitting it**, as you will need it to make your payment. To pay, attach the registration form to a check made payable to SCIRA (\$75.00 per session) and send both to Judy Redman at Post Office Box 10101, Rock Hill, South Carolina 29731. No purchase orders will be accepted.

Professional Development, Grants, and Other Opportunities

The federal grant, *Improving Literacy through School Libraries*, is now open. The grant is open to local education agencies (LEAs) in which at least 20 percent of students served are from families with incomes below the poverty line. A list of eligible districts is available online; just select South Carolina from the list of states (<http://www.ed.gov/programs/lsl/eligibility.html>). The purpose of this grant is to help LEAs improve reading achievement by providing students with increased access to up-to-date school library materials; well-equipped, technologically advanced school library media centers; and professionally certified school library media specialists. District library supervisors participated in a workshop about this grant on January 13. The deadline for proposal submissions is 4:30 p.m., March 6. For more information or for assistance with your grant proposal, contact Martha Alewine (malewine@ed.sc.gov or 864-229-4230).

Governor's School Applications Are Due by March 1, 2009



Governor's School for Science and Mathematics
401 Railroad Avenue
Hartsville, South Carolina 29550
Phone: 803-252-9152
www.scgssm.org

If you know a high school sophomore who has a passion for science, math and technology, now is the time to encourage him/her to apply for admission to the Governor's School for Science and Mathematics (GSSM).

For 20 years, GSSM has opened its doors to eager, motivated students who seek the environment of a small, residential learning community. Admission to GSSM is a highly selective process and takes into consideration class rank, standardized test scores, GPA, teacher recommendations and extracurricular activities.

Interested students can apply online at <http://www.gssm.k12.sc.us/apply.htm> or call the Admissions Office at 843-383-3944 for an application. Selected students will be notified in April.

Annual Literacy Leaders Award

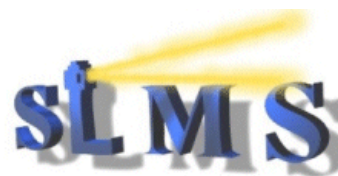
Sponsored by the U.S.C. School of Library and Information Science and given each fall, this award recognizes individuals, organizations, groups, and/or businesses that have had a major and significant effect on literacy in South Carolina. These contributions can include, but are not limited to, the following kinds of activities:

- ❖ developing and implementing innovative and creative approaches to literacy education;
- ❖ establishing models of best practices in literacy education;
- ❖ providing service to under-served groups and communities;
- ❖ providing funding and support for these kinds of programs; or
- ❖ making other statewide contributions deemed appropriate by the Committee

Nominations should take the form of a one-page letter summarizing the statewide impact of the nominee with respect to the award criteria and be received no later than **April 1, 2009**. Send your nominations by email to: Ellen Hinrichs at ellenh@sc.edu or Lynn Teague at Teague_L@bellsouth.net. You may also mail your nominations to:

Ellen Hinrichs
Executive Director
South Carolina Center for Children's Books and Literacy
1500 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201

School Library Media Services Monthly Reading Calendars



The February monthly reading calendar is available online at <http://reading-calendars.pbwiki.com>. If you would like to receive the calendar each month as a direct email, please send an email to Martha Alewine (malewine@ed.sc.gov) with the following statement in the subject line: *Subscribe Monthly Reading Calendars*.

Annual Read-in at the Capital

This year's Read-In will be on **Thursday, April 16**. If you and your students plan to attend, you must register. Registrations will be accepted by mail or by fax. The registration form is available online at http://scasl.net/documents/readin-form_000.pdf. The registration deadline is **March 16**.

No Book Left Unread (NBLU) Summer Reading Program

The 2008 NBLU summer reading program was a huge success with participants reading **15,957,224** pages between June 1 and August 31, 2008. We will recognize the NBLU Reader Leaders on March 12, 2009, at the Awards Luncheon during the South Carolina Association of School Librarians annual conference.

Top Reading Schools

- Buford Middle School, Lancaster County Schools (1,366,534 pages) *This was the top school in the state.*
- Wando High School, Charleston County Schools (1,038,052 pages) *This was the second highest total in the state.*
- Oak Pointe Elementary School, Lexington-Richland District 5 (288,167 pages)
- Midway Elementary School, Anderson 5 (228,604 pages)
- McCants Middle School, Anderson 5 (511,858 pages)
- Liberty High School, Pickens County Schools (182,801 pages)

Top Reading Students

- Mariah Johnson, Oak Pointe Elementary School, Lexington-Richland 5 (28,503 pages)
- Jeremy Fowler, Wren Middle School, Anderson 1 (36,460 pages)
- Brad Wilkins, Liberty High School, Pickens County (50,484 pages)

Top Reading Faculty/Staff Members

- Kathi Wood, Hunter St. Elementary, York 1 (31,240 pages)
- Sandy Steely, Southwood Middle School, Anderson 5 (29,848 pages)
- Christopher Simpson, Brookland-Cayce High School, Lexington County School District 2 (52,856 pages)

Schools with the Highest Percentage of Student Participation

- Midway Elementary School, Anderson 5 (38%)
- Furman Middle School, Sumter 2 (72%)
- Buford Middle School, Lancaster County (72%)
- Wando High School, Charleston County (17%)

Thanks to the generosity of our corporate sponsors, The Reading Warehouse and Follett Library Resources, each school will receive a certificate for books for the library media center. Each individual (student and faculty/staff member) will receive a certificate for books for their personal library. SCDE School Library Media Services will give a selection of books to each school for the school library media center and to each individual for their personal library.

Every school is encouraged to participate in the 2009 NBLU Summer Reading Program which begins on June 1 and ends on August 31. Winners will be announced in September and awards made in March 2010. Additional information will be available March 1 or you may contact Martha Alewine (malewine@ed.sc.gov).

State Superintendent's Writing Awards Program

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) is pleased to announce the creation of the State Superintendent's Writing Awards Program, previously known as the Lt. Governor's Writing Awards Program. The purpose of this awards program is to support the teaching of the South Carolina Academic Standards and provide fifth and eighth grade students an opportunity to express themselves through the writing process.

Participating districts are to implement the program from December 2008 to March 2009 according to a timeframe that works best for them. It is suggested that students work on writing essays between December and February, with scoring and judging done in March. Each district's winning essay and forms are due in our office no later than **March 31, 2009**.

Each grade level will respond to one prompt only. Although choice is a crucial part of effective writing instruction, we must be able to equitably score essays. Each year, the Office of Instructional Promising Practices will partner with other offices within the agency to create writing prompts on related topics. Writing prompts may require research of the topic. Time for research and increased time to write have been added.

The 2008–09 writing prompts focus around the topic of financial literacy and are as follows:

Fifth Grade—*Savings and Financial Well-Being*

Discuss how saving contributes to financial well-being. Do you think it is important to start saving at your current age? Why or why not?

Eighth Grade—*Personal Financial Responsibility*

Think about the current economic crisis in our country. Why is it important that every individual be responsible for personal financial decisions? How can you start learning financial responsibility at your age?

The writing program will be highlighted at a statewide recognition ceremony in May 2009, in Columbia. All winners and their families, district superintendents, principals, teachers, and writing coordinators will be invited.

Specific details regarding the program were sent to each district's English language arts contact. Please contact Caroline Savage at 803-734-4770 or csavage@ed.sc.gov if you have any questions regarding the program.

The South Carolina Algebra Project: Participation for the 2009-10 School Year

The South Carolina Algebra Project (SCAP) will be conducting an informational meeting for schools interested in participating in the project during the 2009-10 school year in March 2009. The specific date and location will be announced in the March edition of *Teaching and Learning Links*.

SCAP is a professional development opportunity for middle and high school Algebra teachers. Now completing its second year, the SCAP team works with 135 teachers in middle and high schools across the state. Participating teachers receive training during the summer and monthly during the school year. In addition, the teachers have access to the AgileMind Algebra curriculum created by the Dana Center at the University of Texas.

For more information contact John Holton at 803-734-8311 or jholton@ed.sc.gov.



Letter P.A.L.S. – A Personalized Letter Adventure Series

Letter P.A.L.S., a free six-week digital reading program, begins on June 22. The purpose of the program is to help first through third grade students offset summer reading loss/setback and show up next year ready to read. Teachers can begin signing up their classes now at the Letter P.A.L.S. website (<http://www.letterpals.org>).

Participating students receive personalized letters each Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The letters are three pages in length, professionally written and illustrated. A sample letter is available on the Letter P.A.L.S. website by clicking on the computer on the home page.

Letter P.A.L.S. is another reading encouragement program that would fit with the SCDE No Book Left Unread summer reading program and the public library summer reading program.

You can read full details about the Letter P.A.L.S. Summerfest 2009 reading program online at <http://www.letterpals.org>.

ACT/SAT Improvement Workshops

ACT Academic Improvement Workshops (EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT)

ACT, Inc. and the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) invite each district to send a team to the ACT Academic Improvement Workshops to be held regionally February 17-20, 2009. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m., with the workshop beginning at 9:00 a.m. and ending at 12:00 Noon. ACT will provide continental breakfast.

These half-day sessions will provide an opportunity for district teams to learn how to interpret and use EXPLORE, PLAN, and the ACT results. As a result of the workshop, participants will understand the relationships between these programs and how using them helps students be better prepared for college and the work place. Participants will understand the structure (specifications) of each test and the skills measured on each. They will understand how to interpret the meaning of scores on all three tests using the College Readiness Standards and the College Readiness Benchmarks. A range of resources from ACT, many of which are free, for helping students prepare for college-level courses will be presented.

Each district will be limited to a team of five. We are suggesting the following team composition: (1) the district administrator(s) responsible for curriculum; (2) curriculum leaders or teachers at the middle and high school level; and (3) curriculum leaders or teachers from the core content areas of English, math, social studies, and science. Please note that team members should be expected to lead comparable workshops for colleagues in their district. To register a team, please complete the attached form and return it no later than February 6, 2009, to Letesha Anderson at letesha.anderson@act.org. Please submit one form only per district. Confirmation (including building, room numbers and directions) will be sent to the email addresses listed on the registration form.

Each participant should bring his/her school's fall 2008 EXPLORE or PLAN Profile Summary Report to the workshop. High school participants should also bring their 2008 ACT High School Profile Report.

If you have any questions about the workshops, you may contact Suzette Lee at slee@ed.sc.gov or 803-734-6103. For questions about registration or locations, please contact Letesha Anderson at letesha.anderson@act.org or 404-231-1952. We hope that you will consider sending a team to one of these important workshops.

Summary of Skills and Answers Workshops (PSAT/NMSQT)

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) and the College Board will sponsor regional PSAT/NMSQT improvement workshops, entitled the "Summary of Answers and Skills Workshops" (SOAS, for South Carolina educators in late February and early March 2009.

The purpose of these workshops is to assist district and school personnel in interpreting results from student performance on the PSAT/NMSQT. The information provided will allow districts and schools to compare how their students performed in comparison to national and state groups on identical test items; link classroom activities with the skills the PSAT/NMSQT measures: critical reading, verbal reasoning, math problem solving, and writing skills; and foster discussion within the districts and schools on students' performance and skills.

Ideally, each district should send a team composed of the superintendent; associate superintendent for curriculum and instruction; and math, English language arts, science, social studies, and guidance coordinators. Likewise, each school should send a team composed of the principal; assistant principal for instruction; chairs of the math, English, science, social studies, and guidance departments; and classroom teachers. However, given the budget crisis, we are suggesting that each district send one team composed of district and school personnel.

Since this is a hands-on workshop, each participant should bring two or three individual copies of the SOAS report to the workshop. This report is provided via secure online access and should be downloaded from the reporting.collegeboard.com web site. Access codes were included on the Student Roster of Scores sent to schools in mid-December. Last year's SOAS users should not need to enter an access code this year.

In addition to the SOAS report, the College Board provides a free web-based tool, AP Potential that allows schools to generate rosters of students who are likely to score a 3 or better on a given AP® Exam. You may access AP Potential at <http://www.appotential.collegeboard.com>. We encourage you to review these reports prior to the meeting.

The workshops will be held from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m., with registration from 9:30 a.m.-10 a.m., on the dates and in the locations listed below:

February 25
Greenville County Library System
25 Heritage Green Place
Greenville, SC 29201
864-242-5000

March 2
Richland County Public Library
1431 Assembly Street
Columbia, SC 29201
843-805-6930

March 3
Charleston Public Library
68 Calhoun Street
Charleston SC 29401
803-799-9084

To register, complete the registration form and send it to Sheila Boykin using the contact information on the form. Please note that space is limited, so we will fill slots on a first-come, first-served basis. Do not consider yourself registered unless you receive a confirmation email from Ms. Boykin. The registration deadline for the February 25 workshop is Friday, February 20. The registration deadline for the other two workshops is February 25.

Because space is limited, if we are unable to accommodate everyone who wishes to attend one of these SOAS workshops, Lynn Demmons, South Carolina's College Board Educational Manager for K-12 Services, is willing to conduct one of these workshops for an entire school district or individual schools as her time allows. To schedule a workshop, please contact her at ldemmons@collegeboard.org.

If you have any questions, please contact Suzette Lee (803-734-6103 or slee@ed.sc.gov) or Mrs. Boykin (803-734-0476 or sboykin@ed.sc.gov) using the information cited above. We hope to see you at one of these informative regional workshops.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide leadership, professional development, and technical assistance to the education community through the implementation of innovative practices that lead to student learning through standards-based instruction.

Programs, Projects, and Initiatives

To meet our mission, the Office of Instructional Promising Practices offers an array of programs designed to meet the needs of districts, schools, and teachers.

- Best Practice Seminars
- Bridges to Early Learning
- Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP)
- Early Childhood Education
- Exemplary Writing Project
- SC GEAR UP
- iCoaching Program (Science and Mathematics)
- Keeping Learning On Track* (classroom formative assessment pilot)
- Mathematics and Science Programs
- Reading Recovery
- Response to Intervention
- SC Algebra Project
- SC Coalition for Mathematics and Science
- SC Middle Level Literacy Institute
- SC Reading Initiative
- SC Reading First
- School Library Media Services (SLMS)
- Work Sampling

For additional information on these various programs, please visit our website <http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/Standards-and-Learning/Instructional-Promising-Practices>

For information on workshops, training sessions, and other professional development opportunities, please see our office calendar, available online at <http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/Standards-and-Learning/Instructional-Promising-Practice>